



March 30, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Arlene Granadosin-Jones
City of Rancho Cordova, Planning Department
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Sunridge Villas (Sundance) Design Review (PLND-0322-0029)

Dear Arlene Granadosin-Jones:

Thank you for providing Civic Thread the opportunity to comment on the Sunridge Villas development. The project is a single-family residential development with 114 proposed residential lots, located southwest of the intersection of Douglas Rd and Sunrise Blvd and directly adjacent to the existing Anatolia Shopping Center, a Walgreens, and the Folsom South Canal Bike Trail.

It is critical to the comprehensive success of developments, particularly those designed around single-family homes that are removed from denser concentrations of amenities and resources, for developers to consider improvements that prioritize the safe and active use of streets and public space. The location of this site near a shopping center that has a grocery store (Raley's), a Walgreens, as well as the proximity to a regional bike trail that can provide safe and convenient access to other parts of Rancho Cordova, means that it is entirely possible for residents of the development to choose to walk or bike, rather than drive, to run errands or access nearby amenities.

However, the development as is needs improvements to ensure that people who wish to use active transportation modes can conveniently and safely do so. Please find our comments and suggestions for improvements below.

Sidewalks:

As stated in the two letters Civic Thread, formerly WALKSacramento, sent regarding this development in 2017 (attached to the end of this letter), the lack of sidewalks in this development will make walking far less convenient for residents. We appreciate the relatively narrow streets, and the inclusion of sidewalks on some of the streets, which is a

large improvement over having no sidewalks at all. However, further improvements to connectivity would make this a more pedestrian-friendly development.

First, sidewalks should be included on all through streets on both sides of the street. We note that the areas adjacent to the sidewalks at present are designated as no-parking zones, which is an appreciated design feature. Should additional sidewalks be added, it is not necessarily a bad thing to have sidewalks that abut vehicle parking, though if parking spaces are provided adjacent to a sidewalk then curbs should be a vertical design rather than rolled. Vertical curbs prevent vehicles from parking partially on the sidewalk and impeding access for pedestrians, particularly people using wheelchairs.

Near the two entrances to the development, sidewalks should be at least 6 feet wide to provide more space as a buffer between cars that may be moving faster than residential speed as they turn off Sunrise Blvd. This provides a safe area for pedestrians until the streetscape has changed significantly enough that drivers are prepared to view pedestrians as equal users of the roadway. On streets within the development, sidewalks should be at least 5' wide as a general best practice. We recommend:

- **Increasing the base sidewalk width throughout the development from 4.5 feet to 5 feet at a minimum, with 6 foot sidewalks near the entrances.**
- **The inclusion of median islands at the primary and secondary entrances in order to slow traffic entering the development and create a more pleasant pedestrian environment.**
- **Replacement of proposed rolled curbs with vertical curbs.**

Please also see our proposed sidewalk additions in the attachment at the end of this letter. The orange dashed lines denote sidewalks that should be put in to improve pedestrian safety. Drivers entering the development or driving along a straight road, such as along "A" Drive, are more likely to purposely or inadvertently drive faster than a 5-10 mph speed that is safe for pedestrians, thus making sidewalks on both sides necessary to prevent jaywalking or walking in the street. The purple dotted lines are areas for which sidewalks would greatly improve connectivity. We understand that putting in continuous sidewalks on every street may not be feasible at this stage. If this is the case, the streets must be designated as pedestrian spaces because pedestrians will need to use the street to access sidewalks that do exist. To achieve this, we recommend the following:

- **At a minimum each street should have a sidewalk on one side (for example, “B” Drive currently does not have a sidewalk proposed on either side).**
- **Tighten all corner radii to 10’ or 15’ to slow traffic to safe vehicle speeds.**
- **Include street markings that indicate the streets are shared spaces.**
- **Construct the two largest internal intersections (both located on “A” Drive) as raised intersections to slow vehicles.**

Finally, well-marked crosswalks are needed at every intersection in the development but are especially important near the entrances to provide a visual signal that drivers should watch for pedestrians.

- **We recommend high-visibility crosswalk markings at the shortest possible crossing distance between curb cuts, in every location that a sidewalk ends and picks up on the other side of the street, paying particular attention to the two entrances off Sunrise Blvd and the two largest internal intersections on “A” Drive. Marking might include paint striping, colored concrete, or a similar improvement.**

Off-site Connectivity Improvements:

We are glad to see some sidewalk improvements and planters proposed along Sunrise Blvd. Sunrise Blvd is a two-lane southbound and three-lane northbound arterial road where people drive at high speeds. At present, it has a Class II bike lane, but no one other than the most confident cyclists will be comfortable using this.

- **We recommend the developer work with the City to upgrade the Class II bike lane along Sunrise Blvd (from the Douglas Rd/Sunrise Blvd intersection to just south of the Sunrise Blvd/Herodian Dr intersection) to a wider, buffered bike lane to provide bikers more safety and comfort.**
- **As part of the Sunrise Blvd sidewalk improvements, we suggest providing a pedestrian connection from the eastern-most portion of “B” Drive to the sidewalk on Sunrise, to provide a much shorter route to the Walgreens main entrance.**

Additionally, Argonaut Park is located less than 0.5 miles away from the proposed development, with access along Herodian Dr. This park is an important amenity that can benefit the residents of this development by providing them a place to recreate and exercise.

- **We recommend that the developer work with the City to continue the Class II bike lane striping on Herodian Dr from Sunrise Blvd to Anatolia Dr to make this a more comfortable bike ride and signal to drivers that they are sharing the road with bicyclists.**

Finally, there does not appear to be a proposed pedestrian/bicycle connection to the Folsom South Canal Bike Trail from the site. This is an enormous missed opportunity to connect residents of this development to employment, amenities, and other parts of the City without the need for a vehicle.

- **We strongly recommend that if the right of way is not currently acquired to provide a pedestrian/bicycle connection path from the site to the trail, that the developer work with the City to get right of way and create a connection.** This is consistent with Action OSPT.3.1.3 – “Provide appropriate pedestrian and bicycle linkages to existing facilities, particularly to those facilities within the American River Parkway and the Folsom South Canal” stated in Rancho Cordova’s General Plan.

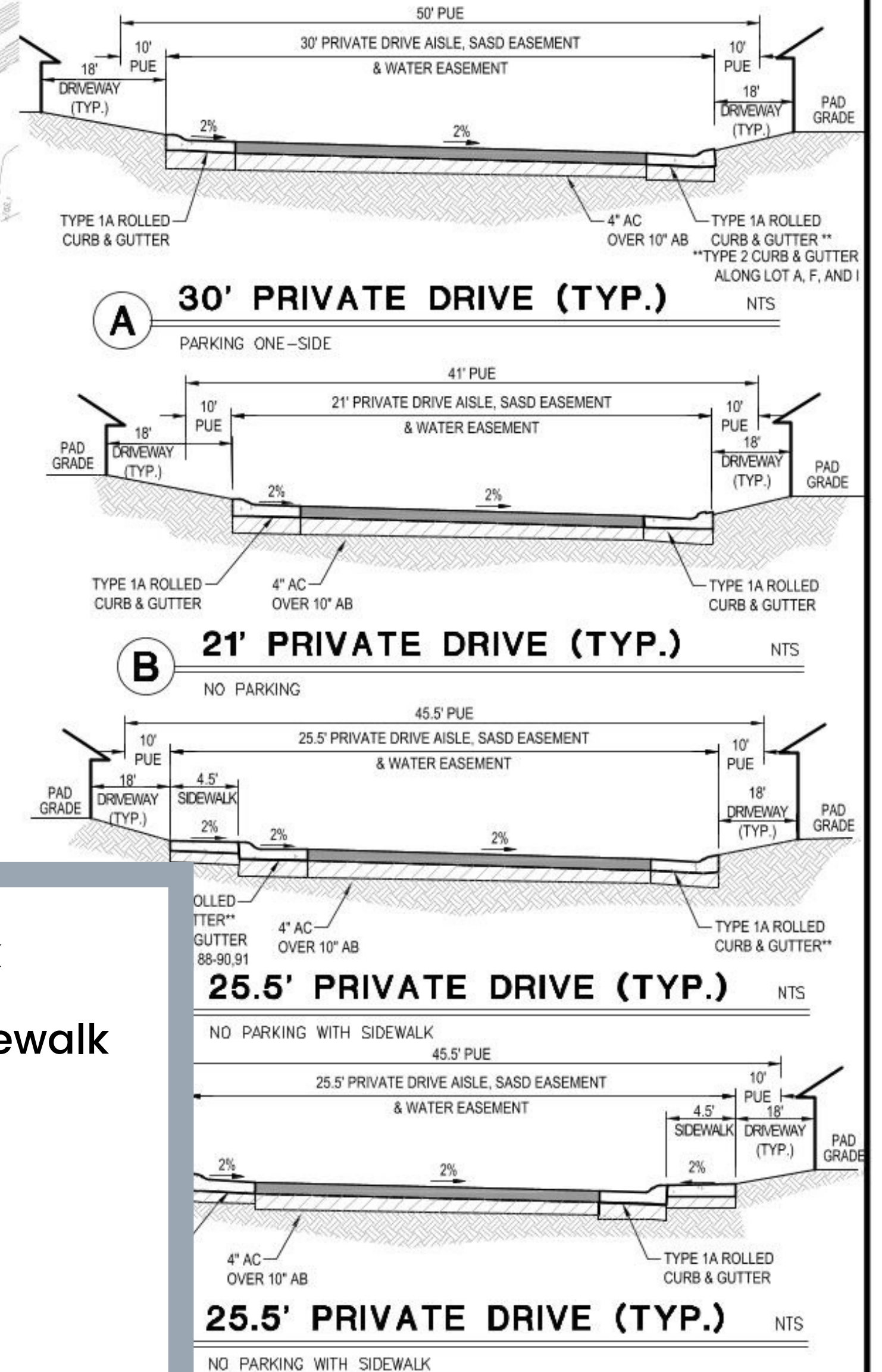
Development projects that lead to more walking and active travel are critical to our community’s future. Civic Thread is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved public health and physical fitness, better air quality, a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in neighborhoods, and more sustainable communities and local economies.

Thank you for consideration of these comments and recommendations. Please notify Civic Thread of future routings or notices for this project. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Canepa
Project Manager, Civic Thread



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9/1/2017

VIA EMAIL

June Cowles
City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Sundance (DD9708)

Dear Ms. Cowles:

WALKSacramento has reviewed the routing for Sundance (DD9708) and we offer the following comments.

Sundance is proposed for a site immediately adjacent to Sunridge Plaza neighborhood shopping center and the Folsom South Canal regional bike trail. Sunridge Plaza, which has over 90,000 square feet of tenant space, including a 40,000 square foot Raley's, is less than a 1/4-mile from the furthest point in Sundance and should be able to serve the daily and weekly needs of Sundance residents. The bike trail along the Folsom South Canal, which could provide access to employment, recreation and other destinations in Rancho Cordova, is less than 400 feet from the Sundance site.

Unfortunately, design elements of the Sundance site plan will discourage people from walking to Sunridge Plaza neighborhood shopping center and prevent bicyclists from accessing the Folsom South Canal bicycle trail.

The private drive aisles and courts in Sundance are proposed to be 30' wide, parking on one side, and no sidewalks. The project seems to depend upon "shared streets" for circulation, but there are several problems with the design. Pedestrians will need to walk in the street along with auto and bicycle traffic. If autos are limited to 5-mph travel speeds, adult pedestrians may be able to integrate with the autos safely, but children may be at much greater risk. The site drawings and project description do not give any indication, other than two 10'-radius curb returns at 'C' Court, of traffic calming features or programs to ensure the safe mixing of pedestrians and autos.

Further compounding the safety risks for pedestrians is the minimal transition in environments that drivers will experience as they approach Sundance. There are two vehicular entrances into Sundance. Each entry way is off of Sunrise Boulevard, a five- to six-lane thoroughfare with a 55-mph speed limit. The main entrance to Sundance will be less than 350 feet from Sunrise Boulevard via a four-lane section of Herodian Drive. The secondary entrance will be at Sunrise Boulevard. Expecting drivers to transition from 55 mph to 5 mph in seconds or tens of seconds is unrealistic.

It doesn't appear there will be much room for trees on the lots, after accounting for driveways and front door walkways. The ten to twenty feet of width left in the front yards may accommodate ornamental trees, but it seems improbable that large trees will be planted to shade the pedestrian path on the drive aisles and courts. Shade trees are important, not only for

the shade they provide and the value they add to property, but they can also contribute to lower traffic speed.

The previous discussion is premised on the assumption that residents will be able to easily walk from their front door to the street. However, since sidewalks and accompanying curb ramps aren't provided, residents that have temporary or permanent mobility or vision impairments may have trouble negotiating the rolled curbs at the edges of the drive aisles and courts.

Lastly, the routing drawings do not show a connection to the bike trail along the Folsom South Canal. Access to the bike trail would be valuable to commuting and recreational bicyclists, and it would be desirable to pedestrians for recreation and exercise.

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

Attachment: Development Checklist for Biking and Walking

DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST for BIKING and WALKING

*Prepared by WALKSacramento and SABA (Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates)
September 2012*

This checklist is provided to give an indication of design, engineering, and policy elements that we consider when reviewing development projects.

POLICIES

- ☐ Walking and biking is a priority
- ☐ Adopted a policy to develop a full multi-modal and ADA accessible transportation system

Project Review and Comment

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ Pedestrian Master Plan
- ☐ Bicycle Master Plan
- ☐ Regional Blueprint
- ☐ Regional Blueprint Consistent General Plans
- ☐ Adopted Climate Action Plans
- ☐ Subdivision ordinances to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety
- ☐ Zoning ordinance to support pedestrian and bicycle access and safety

ENGINEERING

- ☐ SIDEWALKS & BIKELANES ON BOTH SIDES OF MAJOR ROADWAYS
 - Pedestrian Level of Service “C” or better on arterials
 - Bicycle Level of Service “C” or better on arterials
- ☐ SAFE CROSSINGS FOR PEDESTRIANS
 - every 300-600 feet on major arterials
 - well lit, marked crosswalks
 - audible signals & count-down signals
 - median refuge islands
- ☐ SPEED MANAGEMENT
 - Speed limits based on safety of pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Implement “road diets” where there is excess lane capacity
- ☐ STREET DESIGN STANDARDS
 - Maximize pedestrian and bicyclist safety
 - Sidewalks buffered by trees and landscaping on major arterials
 - Vertical curbs
 - 5’ minimum sidewalk widths, 8’ in front of schools
 - 6’ minimum bike lanes on busy streets

❑ **INTERSECTIONS**

- Median refuge islands for pedestrians
- Signal timing to enable safe passage
- Signal detection for bicyclists
- Crossings on all 4 legs of intersections

❑ **ELIMINATE BARRIERS**

- Freeway, railroad, river and creek crossings
- Obstructions in sidewalks and bike lanes

NEW DEVELOPMENT – REQUIRE

- ❑ Walking & bicycling circulation plans for all new development
- ❑ Direct and convenient connections to activity centers, including schools, stores, parks, transit
- ❑ Mixed uses and other transit supporting uses within ¼ mile of light rail stations or bus stops with frequent service
- ❑ Minimum width streets
- ❑ Maximum block length of 400'
- ❑ 4-lane maximum for arterials; Recommend 2 lanes wherever possible

NEW DEVELOPMENT – DISCOURAGE

- ❑ Cul-de-sacs (unless it includes bike/ped connections)
- ❑ Gated and/or walled communities
- ❑ Meandering sidewalks
- ❑ Inappropriate uses near transit (gas stations, drive-thru restaurants, mini storage and other auto dependent uses)

BUILDINGS – REQUIRE

- ❑ Direct access for pedestrians from the street
- ❑ Attractive and convenient stairways
- ❑ Bicycle parking – long & short term
- ❑ Shower & clothing lockers

OLDER NEIGHBORHOODS

- ❑ Improve street crossings
- ❑ Reduce speeds
- ❑ Provide new connections
- ❑ Create short cuts for walkers and bicyclists by purchase of properties or other means
- ❑ Provide sidewalks on both sides of major streets

Policy Review and Comment

ENFORCEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- ❑ Enforce speed limits
- ❑ Enforce crosswalk rules – conduct crosswalk sting operations
- ❑ Enforce restrictions against parking on sidewalks
- ❑ Enforce bicycle rules including riding with traffic, lights at night, stopping at red lights
- ❑ Implement CVC 267 setting speed limits based on pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- ❑ Sweep streets and fix hazards
- ❑ Repair and replace broken sidewalks

EDUCATION

- ❑ Train staff on pedestrian and bicycle facility design.
- ❑ Train development community about pedestrian and bicycle planning and safety issues
- ❑ Bicycle skills training

FUNDING

- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in capital improvement programs
- ❑ Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities as a part of roadway widening and improvement projects
- ❑ Support Measure A pedestrian and bicycle facility allocation
- ❑ Set priorities based on safety and latent demand
- ❑ SACOG Community Design grants & Bike/Ped grants
- ❑ California Bicycle transportation Account
- ❑ Safe Routes to School

www.walksacramento.org

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10/3/2017

VIA EMAIL

June Cowles
City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

RE: Sundance Resubmittal (DD9708)

Dear Ms. Cowles:

WALKSACRAMENTO has reviewed the routing for Sundance Resubmittal (DD9708) and we offer the following comments.

The major change to the project that would affect pedestrians is the inclusion of sidewalks on some of the private street segments. While constructing sidewalks in front of 20 of the 114 house lots will provide a safe path of travel between the two subdivision entrances, the issue of accessibility remains for the remaining 94 houses. This is because there will be a rolled curb between the driveway that will be the walkway to the house and the street that will be the walkway to everywhere else.

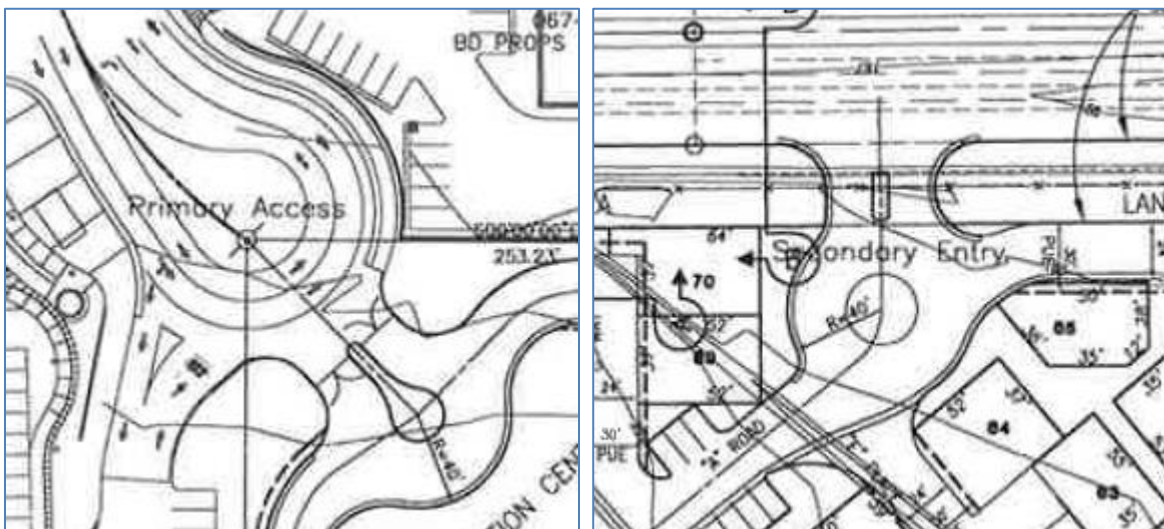
The population is aging in the Sacramento region, and Rancho Cordova is no different. The Rancho Cordova General Plan states that residents and the City's decision-makers envision "The City's population will be older than it is today, with more maturing households, and the City will respond by providing a wider range of housing opportunities." The Sundance proposal may add to the range of housing, but it will not provide for the mobility needs of an increasing larger segment of the population because pedestrian access to individual houses will be hindered by rolled curbs.

As people age, their vision, balance and flexibility can diminish making it difficult to negotiate a rolled curb on their own or with assistance. Even younger adults may find they have trouble with a rolled curb when their mobility is temporarily limited due to illness or injury. A rolled curb may present some of these problems even if there's a sidewalk, but at least a resident or guest would be able to walk to the nearest corner to a curb ramp and continue their journey on other sidewalks.

There are several other potential issues the proposed site plan introduces. Garbage, recycling and green waste cans will take up three or four feet on each side of the street during collections times. This will reduce the effective street width and shift pedestrian travel further into the path of vehicles. All of the streets drain to one side, so a portion of the lower side may not be usable when it's raining. Combined with parked vehicles and narrow streets, such as those with cross section C, the pedestrian environment becomes congruous with the auto and truck environment. Without strong visual clues and physical design elements, the streets in Sundance

will not function as “shared streets.” **WALKSacramento recommends incorporating either sidewalks throughout the Sundance project site or the following traffic calming features to create “shared streets.”**

The 2005 tentative map for the project site incorporated median islands that would be a good start at creating “shared streets” for this project. The horizontal change in path of travel created by these medians slows vehicles and heralds the different environment for drivers. A vertical change in path, such as that created by a speed table, would also provide a similar effect. Using either horizontal or vertical change in path at the entrances can help with the transition from typical street designs outside of Sundance to a “shared street” design within Sundance. The images below, from the 2005 tentative map, are included to illustrate only the use of median islands. **WALKSacramento recommends adding median islands at the primary and secondary entrances.**



Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the entry transition areas to provide a safe area for pedestrians until the streetscape has changed significantly enough that drivers are prepared to view pedestrians as equal users of the roadway. **We recommend adding sidewalks on both sides of the entrance streets within the project site.**

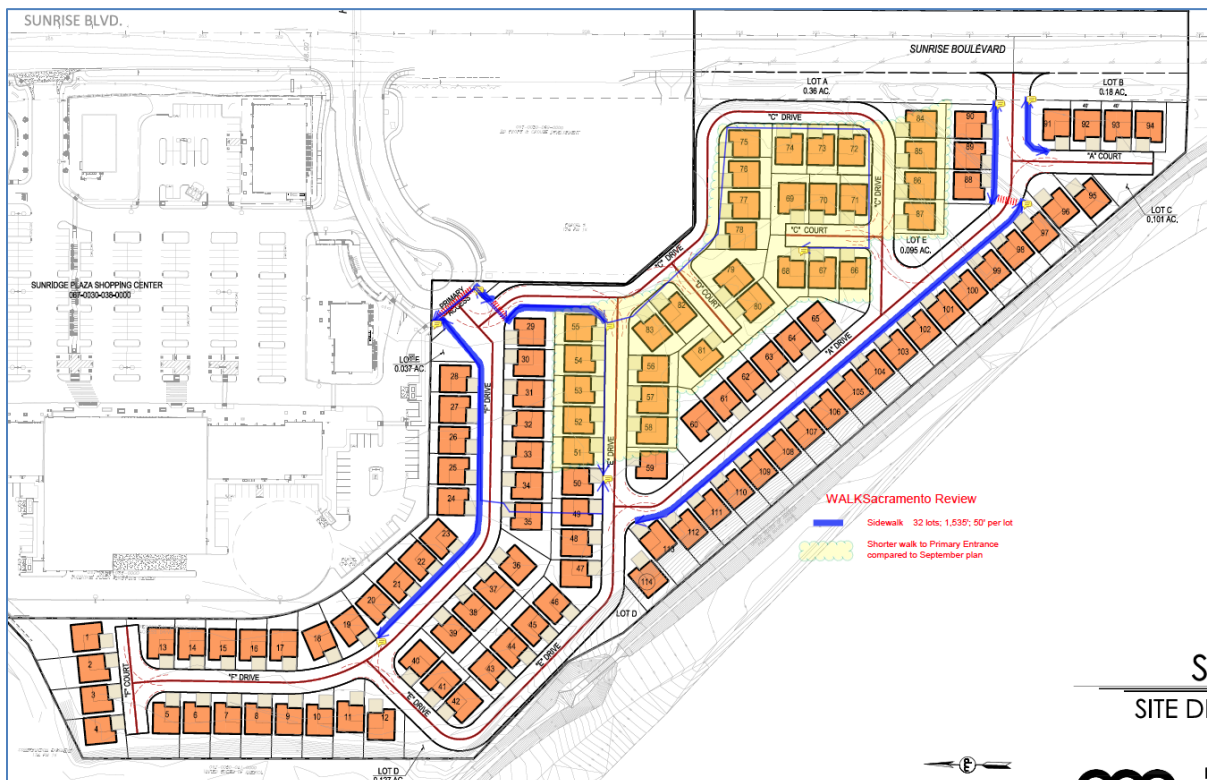
We observed in our previous letter that the site drawings and project description do not give any indication of traffic calming features or programs, other than a few 10' curb return radii, to ensure the safe mixing of pedestrians and autos. The revised plan maintains 10' radii at Courts “B” and “C”, but the rest of the intersections have radii at a minimum of 25'. **We recommend reducing as much as possible any radii currently greater than 10'.**

Additional traffic calming features are needed to create a safer pedestrian pathway on the private streets. The 600'-long straight section of “A” Drive between “B” Drive and the curve near “A” Court will make it easy for drivers to purposely or inadvertently exceed a safe-for-pedestrians 5- to 10-mph speed. **We recommend that the two intersections of “A” Drive at “B” Drive be constructed as raised intersections to slow traffic.**

It appears in the revised drawings that the sidewalk placement at the two intersections of “A” Drive at “B” Drive will not provide direct crossings of “B” Drive. The curb ramps are aligned with the center of the intersection rather than the opposing curb ramp. **We recommend extending sidewalks around corners sufficiently far enough so that curb ramps on opposite side of the street face each other and the crossing distance is shortened.**

We also recommend adding a pedestrian connection through Lot A between “C” Drive and Sunrise Boulevard. This would shorten the walking distance to the commercial centers on both sides of Sunrise Boulevard for many homeowners and avoid the auto traffic entering Sundance on “A” Drive.

The original site plan, from August, appears to provide better pedestrian access than the revised plan. The splitting of the “j-shaped” block near the center of the project site and elimination of the street segment between the block and the Walgreens site creates much longer walking distances from many of the house lots to the adjacent Sunridge Plaza (Raley’s) and Walgreens shopping centers. The diagram below uses yellow shading to indicate the lots for which we believe walk distances to Raley’s would be shorter with the original plan compared to the revised plan. The blue lines show sidewalk locations. Note the long, straight section of sidewalk. This arrangement could also be incorporated in the revised plans. One benefit to this would be a significant increase in the number of houses that have sidewalks.



WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, less motor vehicle traffic

congestion, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and recommendations. If you have questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager